A DISCOURSE AGAINST *Unequal Marriages*,

VIZ.

Against Old Persons marrying with Young.

Against Persons marrying without the Parents or Friends Consent.

Against Persons marrying without their own Consent.

Aurcam quisquis mediocritatem diligit.
Horat.

LONDON,
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BRITISH MUSEUM

AN ESSAY AGAINST Unequal Marriages.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction.

THE Main and Principal Study of all Persons of what condition soever is, how to divert and pass away their Time with most Ease and Satisfaction; and likewise how to

ſoften and leſſen that Perpetual Stock of Miſeries which Sin and the Devil have ſo unhappily brought upon us. This makes mankind in a continual trouble, and cauſes them ſtill to exerciſe their Parts, and ſet their Wits upon the Rack to find out New Arts and Tricks; and are always hoping for New Diverſions to gratifie their hot and eager deſire after *Happineſs*, and to quiet and pleaſe their turbulent and unruly Paſſions; which when beſt of all, they may be compared to peeviſh troubleſom and Froward Children, that muſt ſometimes be humour'd and plaid withall meerly out of policy. And this makes Humane Life ſo unquiet and diſturbed, ſo ſtrangely reſtleſs and uneaſie, that nothing can ſatisfie us but the proſpect, at leaſt, of thoſe flattering Joys, which *Hopes* through a large Teleſcope preſent

ſent to our longing Eyes. It's *Hope* alone that makes us wiſh to live; and *theſe* are the puffing Bladders that raiſe us up, bear us above Water, and keep us from plunging our ſelves into the midſt of an Ocean of racking Doubts and Deſpair; tho oft they carry us over each rolling Wave, and daſh us againſt ſome ſecret Rocks. When a wiſe and thinking man comes carefully and ſeriouſly to reflect upon all his paſt and former *Actions*, he finds little but vain idle *fooleries* not worthy the conſideration of a Man, and ſcarce deſerving a ſerious thought; and in truth would ſooner chooſe almoſt any ſort of Life rather than have 'em plaid over once more; and the very beſt and pleaſanteſt of 'em would be both dull and tedious, were they known before hand.

For this Reaſon it is that we can never be at reſt, our Active Souls being perpetually in Motion, like the Wide Seas, where Swelling Billows are always working and beating upon the Shore, tho the Winds be ne'er ſo ſtill and calm: ſo that we are always contriving and inventing; always expecting and deſiring better things than what we already enjoy, let our Wants and Reaſons be never ſo ſmall and inconſiderable. And for this it is that every Man of what nature ſoever, ſo violently purſues ſome ſorts of Pleaſures and Divertiſements or others, tho but very little and mean, if they be ſuch as they may hope for ſatisfaction from. Some we find who greedily deſire nothing but the groſs Delights of *Senſe*; others pleaſe and hug themſelves with the ſordid hopes of *Wealth* and *Riches*; a third ſort are for gratifying

fying their Curiosity with the more refined Pleasures of *Books* and *Knowledge*; and others feed upon the Airy Charms of *Honour*, and the loud Trumpets of uncertain *Fame*. And so for all others, who commonly follow those Pleasures and Delights, which either the Dictates of the *Natural Temper*, or the common Rudiments of their *Education* guides them to.

But the surest and most certain way to gain Quiet and Satisfaction in this World is, some setled and Honest *Imployment* suitable to our *Estates* and *Qualities*; and that accompanied with an *Unspotted Reputation* and a *Good Conscience*. I mean such a setled *Imployment* as may keep us from being idle, and free us in a great measure from the sensual temptations of the Devil. Then I don't question but I may bring in *Marriage* for a large

and principal ſhare of our *Happineſs*. For this *Bleſſing* of all others, ſeems to be moſt ſolid and durable, and what is moſt univerſally agreed upon by all men: it being a Sacred *Order* and *Inſtitution*, appointed by *God* himſelf when firſt he made the World; ingrafted by *Nature*, and ſought after by moſt men, as a State of Life capable of affording all thoſe Pleaſures and Delights which a Voluptuous Man can ſeek for; all thoſe Comforts that Vertue and Innocence can deſire, and of ſweetning the many bitter Portions of this Life. 'Tis *this* that encreaſes the World, upholds Mankind, and keep 'em from being at an end; and by *this* we ſee our ſelves renew'd, the little Images of our ſelves ſtill growing up as we go down. *This* is a principal means to keep us Chaſt and Honeſt, and free us from the Heavy Clogs of *Conſci-*

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ence which always attend Unlawful Acts. 'Tis *this*, like the Universal Cement, unites Society, joyns our Mutual Loves, and Blooming Joys, and makes us Happy; for before we were but half men, and all our Worldly Delights but half compleat. And as the moderate Pleasures of *it* are innocent, so are the Comforts inestimable.

'Tis true indeed that notwithstanding all these Blessings of a *Married Life*, yet a *Single One* is much more to be preferred and esteemed beyond *that*, by reason of the many and vast advantages belonging to it. But then it must be sure to be always accompanied with that *perfect Innocency* and *unspotted Chastity* that is so wonderful strictly required of all that intend to keep to this condition. And then indeed this State of Life may well be termed the

beſt and happieſt of all others, it being perfectly ſtrip'd and diveſted of all the unhappy troubles and cares of this World; free as the unbounded light of the Sun, whoſe Glorious beams do ſhine o're all the World; and a life that moſt reſembles that of the Angels. But theſe indeed are more peculiar Bleſſings, which Heaven beſtows on a few, and never deſign'd 'em for all; therefore a *Single Life*, in the greateſt part of the World, is ſo far from being good or commendable, that it generally proves a dangerous trap for their *Virtue*, and a gilded Bait which the Devil ſets to corrupt their *Innocency*. So I ſhall inſiſt no longer thereon, nor on thoſe Ungracious Wretches who damn and ridicule *Matrimony* as long as they can get Miſſes for their own uſe; but ſhall look upon *Marriage* as a thing not only moſt ab-

abſolutely neceſſary to keep up and propagate the World, but alſo to keep it honeſt.

If this great and excellent Bleſſing of *Matrimony* be ſo very commonly and frequently found ſo vaſtly contrary to mens expectations, the Wonder is neither great nor ſtrange, ſince the main *Deſigns* and principal *Ends* of it are too often groſly perverted, and horribly abuſed, as tho it was an ordinary indifferent thing, ſcarce worth a taking notice of. And if ſuch a State of Life as *Matrimony* begins raſhly and wickedly, 'tis nothing ſtrange if we find it ends fooliſhly and deſperately. When *Vertues*, *Mutual Love*, equality in *Humours* and *Ages*, conſent of *Friends* or *themſelves* are never, or at leaſt but very ſlightly conſidered; the Devil always comes in for a good part, and is certain to have a principal ſhare in all ſuch

Matches. When he finds that he can ſo well inſinuate himſelf into our Buſineſs, and can have ſo great a hand in the chief of all our concerns, there he finds a large and ſpacious Field to play and pleaſe himſelf withal; and there he is ſure to take his full ſwing of Pleaſure by ſo much indulging his chief Attribute, *Envy*.

Since then this is a State of Life of ſuch a vaſt concern, and upon which depends ſo large a part of Humane Happineſs or Miſery in this preſent World; it will be the higheſt piece of Imprudence and Folly imaginable, to venture upon ſuch a ſerious and ſolemn *Undertaking* without either Caution or Conſideration. Want of care is often reckoned as ill and as dangerous as want of Vertue; and if this will hold good in any place, certainly it will in a buſineſs of ſuch importance as this, where

where all Persons ought to be more than ordinary thoughtful, and to consider that this is their last and best Stake, which should not be thrown away upon every slight and trivial Occasion. To see a man run desperately and rashly to his own certain Ruine, must be an unpardonable Fault, that *Wise Men* would ever be ashamed of; neither would the *World* ever acquit those Persons (who marry only to please others) of the most extream madness, were it not already so sordidly wedded to *Money*, and for that reason alone most abominably partial to all its Friends.

Now a main and principal thing that causes *Marriages* to be so unhappy, and makes this State of Life so miserable, is the *inequality* of them. This is the great mischief that is become so *Epidemical*; and from hence arise most

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of thoſe deadly Feuds and Breaches, and thoſe ſad Misfortunes and Sorrows that ſo uſually attend a *Marriage-Life*, which like peſtilential Diſeaſes infect the whole Maſs of Blood, and put all things out of order. It is *this* alone that ſo often deprives a Wedded Couple of that bright and ineſtimable Jewel *Content*: making all their Deſigns and Actions unſucceſsful and unfortunate, and their ends moſt unhappy and miſerable. And it is this *Content* which is the main and only *White* to be levell'd at; *it* being the very Throne of all our Happineſs, and the utmoſt height of our Ambition. And when *this* is miſſed of, the Perſon is ſo far from being pitied, that he is often counted *an obſtinate Fool that would not, or at beſt but an Ignorant One, that could not attain to it.*

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As concerning *Unequal Marriages*, it will be very difficult to determine any thing that ſhall pleaſe all; and I don't at all queſtion but a great many Perſons will think themſelves very highly affronted, when they once come to find their own Faults expos'd in their true and proper colours; for every Perſon mortally hates to ſee his ugly Face in a true Glaſs. There is uſually ſuch a vaſt diſagreement between *Parents* and Children in this caſe, that there is no hopes of ever reconciling them, for they are always ſo very partial in their own Caſes, and ſo madly run into the Extreams, that they at laſt become inſufferable; ſometimes urging things ſo far, that they ſeem to try who ſhould bid moſt for the higheſt place in *Bedlam*. The *Old Men* always hug themſelves with

with the Golden Thoughts of *Intereſt* and a *Name*; and the *Young Men* with the glittering hopes which proceed from their own Fooliſh or Vitious Humours. So that however the Caſe be given, one ſide muſt of neceſſity be exploded, for to pleaſe two Oppoſites at once, is next to impoſſible. But to ſhew my ſelf as impartial as poſſibly I can, I ſhall aim at the middle way, and ſtrive to ſplit the Hair, chuſing rather to diſpleaſe both Parties in a juſt Caſe, than humour one in a falſe.

Now this ſame keeping exactly in the *middle way* in all things, is the great concern that has always been admired, and ſought after by the wiſer and more publick heads of all Ages; a thing much commended and talked of, but ever little practiſed and underſtood. Men are always ſo much

much in love with themſelves, that they believe nothing is Good or Bad, Juſt or Unjuſt, but only thoſe things that are for or againſt their particular Intereſts. And if a Perſon has a ſetled mind perfectly calm and ſerene, and as free from all Prejudice and Partiality, 'tis but at beſt like an exact and equal Ballance which ſtands ſtill whilſt nothing moves it, but yet is turn'd aſide with the leaſt breath or blaſt of Wind. So that this way muſt needs be very difficult to hit on; and in truth 'tis like a Perſon forced to walk over a deep Well upon a ſmall Cord; if the diſtant bottom or his giddy head ſhould make him ſtep aſide, he's loſt beyond hope; but if he keeps upon it, he hurts his Feet, and is ſtill in danger of the burſting of the Cord. However I ſhall venture my Fortune, as

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ſome others before me, and ſhall endeavour to ſhew the unhappy conſequences in both Caſes; for in truth there are Vices not to be ſpared or humoured; tho I have a very unthankful ſort of an Office, when I am almoſt certain to diſpleaſe all ſides.

But before I come to particulars in theſe Matters, I ſhall premiſe thus much, that to compleat a true and happy *Marriage* are required *Vertuous Inclinations*, *Hearty Love*, and *True Liking*, ſo that they may be both of the ſame Mind, and both have one and the ſame Intereſt and Concern; and to make up this, there muſt be a ſuitable agreement in *Ages*, *Humours* and *Breeding*, as well as *Religion*, *Families* and *Fortunes*. Then when the Perſons are ſo well and happily joyned, they may expect to find all that's Good and Pleaſant, all that's Sweet and Comfortable,

and

and in a word all the Content and Satisfaction that this World will afford.

But when any of these main and principal *Ingredients* are wanting, if *God* bestows his worldly Blessings upon such a *Match*, it will be much to be wondred at, because in every thing they will be tempted to clash and jar together, making their Lives in continual trouble, like Furious Storms and Tempests, which often end with Ruine and Desolation.

In discoursing of *Unequal Marriages*, I shall insist chiefly upon these three sorts, namely, First of *Old Persons Marrying with Young*; Secondly, of *Marrying without Friends Consent*; and Thirdly, of *Marrying without their own Consent*. And all these I may, with good reason, call *Unequal Marriages*:

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The first more properly comprehending Inequality of *Ages* and *Humours*; and the two latter, Inequality in *Families*, *Fortunes* and *Breedings*. Of these I shall endeavour to treat with all the Justice and Equity Imaginable, and with all the Impartiality of an unconcern'd Stander by; not fearing the Surly Looks of the *Old Men*, nor the Insipid Scoffs and Jears of the Young.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Against Old Persons Marrying with Young.

THis Chapter contains a very odd sort of a Subject, which will, I am sure, afford matter enough for Ridicule; for to tye Old Age and Youth together in the Matrimonial Noose, is a thing that may well be ranked among the greater sorts of Extravagancies; and which neither *Nature*, *Justice*, or the *World* can justifie them in. As for *Nature*, there can be no manner of pretence of Incitement from *thence* by either or both Parties; for what can be more

more unnatural and prepoſterous than to go about to unite brisk and ſprightly *Youth* with dull and ſenſleſs *Age*? They might as well have undertaken to have joyned *Summer* and *Winter*, *Light* to *Darkneſs*, or any other ſuch likely piece of Buſineſs, as to think with all the Strength of Imagination to couple together a young luſty piece of Fleſh with an old frigid Statue. Then as for *Juſtice*, it will never be ſatisfied, for what greater breach can there be of *that*, than to joyn two ſuch different Natures together, which will almoſt certainly be the Deſtruction of each other, and to entail a ſtock of Miſery upon Perſons for term of Life. But for the *World*, to be ſure *that* will never excuſe them, but I am confident will be as forward as poſſible to laugh at them; and in ſober

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sadness such *Matches* seem as if they were designed for the laughing purpose. As for my part scarce any thing can seem more ridiculous; for such *Marriages* look like some very strange extravagant Farce, intended only to set all the Spectators into a huge fit of laughter. And he that observes it well, would think they rather design'd to make mirth and sport for others, than to procure any manner of satisfaction to themselves: For some persons are hugely pleased when they can say *I'm glad I have made you sport Sir.*

But to come a little closer to the matter in hand; I'll suppose an Old Gentleman, whose brisk *days* are over, that has a mind to take a turn or two in the World, and once more venture

more unnatural and prepoſterous than to go about to unite brisk and ſprightly *Youth* with dull and ſenſleſs *Age*? They might as well have undertaken to have joyned *Summer* and *Winter*, *Light* to *Darkneſs*, or any other ſuch likely piece of Buſineſs, as to think with all the Strength of Imagination to couple together a young luſty piece of Fleſh with an old frigid Statue. Then as for *Juſtice*, it will never be ſatisfied, for what greater breach can there be of *that*, than to joyn two ſuch different Natures together, which will almoſt certainly be the Deſtruction of each other, and to entail a ſtock of Miſery upon Perſons for term of Life. But for the *World*, to be ſure *that* will never excuſe them, but I am confident will be as forward as poſſible to laugh at them; and in ſober ſad-

ſadneſs ſuch *Matches* ſeem as if they were deſigned for the laughing purpoſe. As for my part ſcarce any thing can ſeem more ridiculous; for ſuch *Marriages* look like ſome very ſtrange extravagant Farce, intended only to ſet all the Spectators into a huge fit of laughter. And he that obſerves it well, would think they rather deſign'd to make mirth and ſport for others, than to procure any manner of ſatisfaction to themſelves: For ſome perſons are hugely pleaſed when they can ſay *I'm glad I have made you ſport Sir.*

But to come a little cloſer to the matter in hand; I'll ſuppoſe an Old Gentleman, whoſe brisk *days* are over, that has a mind to take a turn or two in the World, and once more ven-

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ture the ſtrength of his Body upon that comfortable Text of *Increaſe and Multiply.* What can be more unnatural, than for ſuch a dull Walking Clod of Earth, an Old Doting Fellow of Sixty, to fall a Dying, Sighing, and Languiſhing for a Sprightly Girl of Sixteen? Certainly it muſt be very comical to ſee how featly and trim our ſweet Sir *Courtly* dreſſes himſelf up for a Ball, or a Viſit to his Miſtreſs; how Spruce, Gay and Sparkiſh he appears with his New Tricks and Fooleries about him; and withal how antickly fine he is in all his Accoutrements, whilſt a very *Monkeys Face* and a *Deaths Head*, ſhall brave it out and be called a *Beauty*, forſooth. Nor can it be leſs pleaſant to ſee how Ape-like he mimicks the Cuſtoms and Actions of the Young *Sparks* and ſhining

Beaux

Beaux of the Town (whom he continually envyes and mortally hates) and to see him how neatly he practises the *Bon Mien*, the *Good Grace*, the exact pointing of the Sword to his right Heel, the genteel role in the Stocken, the *Allamode* combing of the Wigg, the careless placing of the Hat, and the other noble accomplishments of the Town.

But the best of all is to see him addressing himself, and paying his *Devoirs* to the bright Goddess his Mistress, where he falls down right to shewing and commending all his Excellencies, especially those which he fancies may be most pleasing and grateful to the young beautiful Sex. He tells her *He's strong and lusty, tough and sound at heart; and that the Young Men of this present Age are all pitiful, weak, half-gotten Milksops, neither*

ther laſting nor able to do ſervice; and all conſumptive Puny Shrimps, fit for nothing but to make ſauce of. His Miſtreſs perhaps all the while ſtands liſtning, being ſtruck dumb with the Charming Rhetorick of this Venerable *Mumpſimus*. But ſhould Father *Grey-Beard* perceive any ſort of Complacency in the Little Creature by ſimpering, ſmiling or the like, then he falls on a freſh to bragging of his Great and Mighty Feats of Activity, as how well he can *Run, Leap and Ride*, and the like. But if by chance at any time his Performances are found to be leſs than his Pretenſions (for Old Men oft make tryals) then he comes off with an idle flam or excuſe, that *'tis only a Fall, a Strain, or Hurt, or ſome other accidental Misfortune; but that he can ſtill Drink and Wench with the beſt of the Town.*

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And thus he goes on with such extravagant Commendations of his own deer self; all the while out-ranting a Common *Gamester*, and out-hectoring a Town *Bully*.

The Poor Young Girl who knows little or nothing of the weighty concerns of *Matrimony* is perhaps caught at last, being allured into the snare with the gay expectations of being *Married* forsooth, and with the wonderful Honour of having a *Husband* before she has got over the long and tedious time of her teens; or rather (which is more probable) with the flattering hopes of riding in a fine gilt Coach and Six, or with the harmonious gingling of his *Guinea's*; or lastly she is forced upon him by a severe and ridged *Father*, or some base mercinary

Guardian, who upon all accounts makes his Markets on her, and ſells her at what price he pleaſes. Whilſt jolly Sir *Feeble Fainwould* leaves no ſtone unturn'd, but beſtirs himſelf on all ſides to obtain his deſire; is as buſie as a Bee, and as merry as the wanton thoughts of a brisk young Wife can make him. But when the Wedding day is come, then he's all in raptures, and is tranſported beyond meaſure with delicate hopes of a *Sweet Encounter* as he calls it; Methinks this conjunction ſeems far unlike that of *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, but rather like *Meceſius* tying the living and dead together.

But to what purpoſe is all this ado? Or wdat is the conſequence of ſuch a hopeful *Match*, but only the getting himſelf the

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right Worshipful Name of *Fool*, or that more honourable Title of *Cuckold*? And indeed these dignified Names are not very hard to be obtain'd, nor much harder to be deserv'd. For the last of these he is sure to have, let his Wife be never so Chast and Vertuous; except the *World* be wonderous civil in this Point; which I may venture to assure him is no common Obligation. For the Common People, as the times go now, have got an ugly scurvy trick of speaking as they think when they find no inducement to the contrary. But this is not all; from *Sayings* they'll commonly fall to asking of *Questions*; as *What kindness she can have for such a Boyish piece of Gravity; what real Comforts can she find in the loathsome Society of a fond jealous Do-*

tard, who ſuſpects all that either look at or ſpeak to her, and dreads nothing like what he knows he deſerves? And what true ſatisfaction can ſhe have by embracing a Statue, and being all night by an unwholſom Neaſt of Diſeaſes, a Cold Lump of Clay, whoſe utmoſt Power is only to encreaſe deſires, and ſet an Edge upon that Appetite, which he can by no means ſatisfie?

Thoſe Perſons that are ſo curious and exact in asking *Queſtions* of one ſide, without doubt won't be backwards in the other, but will ſtily demand, *Where are the great Pleaſures and ſweet Delights ſuch a Husband can take when he finds himſelf fettered to a peeviſh ilnatur'd Wife that moſt certainly hates him, and at every turn wiſhes him hang'd, or at the Devil; a very kind Creature! Who inſtead of comforting and cheriſhing*

riſhing him, plagues and torments him? One that cares for nothing but his Money, fears nothing more than his preſence, and wiſhes for nothing more than her Gallants Company, and her Husbands End? Theſe are only Queſtions 'tis true, but they are good comfortable ones however, and ſuch as would make the *Old Man's Wiſh* tunable all weathers. No doubt but our *Heroe* will find a huge deal of Pleaſure in being almoſt tongue wearied to death by a ſcreaming ſhrill Voice, lowder than the Waters of *London* Bridge, or the *Chataracts* of *Nile*; and now and then for a pure breathing Diverſion, to have his Bald Pate moſt civilly ſaluted with a good Brown Cudgel, inſtead of being gently *rub'd by a cleanly young Girl*; or to have a Bucket of fine cool Water

thrown upon him, when he has far more need of a warm Bed and a good Cordial to chear up his Old Heart. It will also be a wonderful satisfaction to him to have two or three bawling Brats got for him by some good Neighbour, hanging about him and calling *Daddy, Daddy!* Perhaps this wise Fool of a *Father* can hug himself with believing he was instrumental in getting such bouncing Boys at this Age, when his kind *Wife* and Obliging *World* know to the contrary.

These and such like Misfortunes are the common and (I may say) almost certain consequences of all such *Matches*; and whatsoever Miseries and Troubles the Husband meets withal in these Cases, he can't so much as comfort himself with

with that poor and mean pleasure of being *pitied*. The World, tho never in such a good humour, will but laugh at all his complaints, and abuse him for what he has done, saying, *Now he's paid for all his Old Tricks; the Old Sot is right enough served, who bid him play the Fool in his Old Days?* Nay more than all this, the most abominable Rogueries, and greatest pieces of Villanies shall be called *Acts of Justice* forsooth. Sometimes indeed we meet with a very extraordinary kind sort of Women, who slily to prevent the common and frequent distempers of Old Age, and to ease the dear sweet Husbands of their many cares and troubles of this present World, do sometimes give them a gentle Push into the next: but this falls

out as their old Friend the Devil and they can agree.

Having made a few Obſervations, and conſider'd the Tricks and Ways of the *Old Men* a little; let us face about to the other ſide, and take a ſmall View of the *Old Women*, who can't forget the pleaſures of Youth, but muſt be ſporting and playing ſtill, tho juſt at the Graves Mouth. Certainly this ſight can be no leſs ridiculous and ſtrange than the other; to ſee an old decay'd worn out *Widow* caſt by a Vail and fairly ſet up for a *Beauty* and *Fortune*, when her ſhrivel'd Skin looks like ſo much Parchment, and ſerves only for a courſer ſort of Bag to carry her tatter'd Limbs and decay'd Joynts in: with an ugly *Hags* Face, look-

looking like the true Picture of *Envy*. And all this in expectation of catching some young Woodcock in a Fools Trap, whom she doubts not but to out-wit sufficiently, and shew him a sly trick for all his dissimulation; or perhaps of striking up a Bargain with some Puny Small *Wit*, whom she supposes easily to bring up to her hand, and manage him which way she pleases. Tho by the way *Fools* for the most part are worst edg'd tools to meddle withal, and the most unmanageable Creatures under the Sun.

Now to obtain her Ends (that is to say a *Husband*) 'tis necessary to seem brisk and Young again; and to run back ten years in such a case is but a

ſmall matter. For this reaſon ſhe falls to uſing all the affected Smiles, antick Tricks, and toyiſh Actions ſhe can think of; ſtill practiſing the Genteel Motion of the Body, the ſtately carrying of the Head, the neat ſide glance of the Eye, the graceful toſſing of the Fan, &c. Then to ſhew that all her merry days are not over yet, ſhe's chaunting, gigling, and moving her Body at every ſcraping tune ſhe hears. And ſhe prates and talks the whole Company to ſilence; (for when the Teeth are fled, the Tongue ſeldom lie ſtill) and all her Diſcourſe is of *Fine Balls*, *Dancing Bouts*, *Weddings*, *Merry Meetings*, *Gay Gallants*, *Miſtreſſes*, *Intreagues* and the like. The defects of her Old Wrinkled Face muſt be carefully ſupply'd by *Art*, and *Patch* and *Paint* muſt

must be made use of to fill up those Furrows which *Old Time* with his Iron Teeth has so well and plentifully bestowed upon her. As for Body, whether strait or crooked, her Taylor can best fit that. But these indeed are disguises too affected and mean, to be of any considerable use in these concerns, being in the readiest way to make the business more odious and ridiculous; for all such unnatural things carry with them a deformity so gross, as can never be conceal'd.

When she finds these little Tricks to fail in the intended promotion of her purpose (as one may venture to swear they will) more substantial Means are then to used; and the only way left, is to give out *she has*

has good ſtore of Gold, as a thing that ſeldom fails, and is ſufficient to make amends for all other Imperfections and Defects whatſoever: for that, like the glorious Sun, is never Old or Ugly, but always Brisk and Charming, Young and Beautiful. With theſe gay hopes ſhe probably decoys ſome young Gaming *Fop*, or crack'd *Debauchee*, who when he is admitted to the Favour of a Viſit, ſwears to her *by all that's Good, 'tis her excellent Perſon he admires and adores before all the Wealth and Grandeur in the World; and 'tis her Diſcretion, Gravity, Vertue, and* (ſometimes for variety ſake) *Beauty, which he values and eſteems infinitely beyond her Money*; with a great many of ſuch faſhionable *pieces of Gallantry* (as they are called) which every Block-

head

head that is not blind and senseless may see through, and perceive both the Knavery and Folly of. And truly this is no great and wonderful thing now a-days to see such base persons as these so seriously to swear and lye for something, when they do it so very often for nothing at all.

This formal *piece of Antiquity* (you must suppose imagining something extraordinary in her self) believes all he says, and perhaps as much more; then pincking up her formal Face with a simpering kind of smile she tells him *She cannot believe but he's a meer Wag, a very Wag all over, and only dissembles and flatters to wheedle kind hearted Creatures; but yet she vows that these same Young Men have*

have always a very ſtrange taking way with them, and will never be ſaid nay when they are once ſet on. upon this with a Complement and a gracious Smile on her ſide, and a fawning Leer on his, with the Formalities of a ſecond or third Viſit, a Match is clap'd up between the Old Fool and the Young. She indeed expecting great and mighty things, but he gueſſing beforehand what he is like to meet withal, ſeldom comes at her, paſſes away his time merrily, and cares but little (as long as the Money goes briskly about) which end goes forward; So that at beſt he is only as a Kept Perſon in continual Fee. But this won't do with him, for he'll make her to know who's Lord and Maſter, and ſince his old *Grannam of a Spouſe* can't

pleaſe

pleaſe him, her Mony muſt then procure him ſuch a one as can.

But what ſays the World to all this? O wonderous civil! as may be gueſſed by that obliging language which follows. *Oh hang her* (ſays one) *for an Old Beaſt; muſt ſhe be for riding at this time of day? She's paſt Mans uſe now, 'tis high time to fall to procuring.* *Ay* (ſays a ſecond) *what ſhould ſhe do but procure a good bit for her poor Husband and help him at a dead lift? Rot her Old Corps* (ſays a third) *ſhe's good for nothing but to make mony of.* But he, for his part, ſhall be applauded, and commended for what he does, and encouraged for all his fine Rogueries, and ſhe her ſelf muſt be content to bear the brunt of all.

Peo-

People are ſtrangely pleaſed to find *ſhe's met withall at laſt*, and wonderfully pleaſed at every trick he ſerves her, if he ſhould bring a Miſs publickly to his Houſe, or ſome ſuch ſlighty buſineſs; or if he entertains her every day with the ſweet Muſick of *Damn me* and *Rot me* Sparks. But if he chance to find the advantage of touching her *Copy-ho'd*; of making the dirty Acres fly about, the old Houſes to go to Pot, and the tall ſturdy Oaks to rore; that's mirth and ſport enough for a month at leaſt.

I will not inſiſt any longer upon the ill effects and unhappy Misfortunes of ſuch *Matches* as theſe; and ſhall omit the many grateful returns theſe Perſons may expect from their Children and other Relations, who

who are very often fool'd out of good Estates by these means, and New Heirs seldom fail of being produc'd, tho 'tis not in every mans power to get 'em. In my opinion the best Use and greatest Advantage that can be made of such *Matches* is *Pennance* and *Mortification.* For such Old Wives and Husbands (besides the many Afflictions they cause) may indeed prove a better *Memento Mori* than any *Deaths Head*; and perhaps give persons a more lively hint of Mortality than a *Skull* can do. Such sort of *Marriages* may indeed be well compared to tying a man Neck and Heels, and leaving him to shift for himself, whilst his strugling only makes him worse. But how great soever the Misfortunes are, they have always an origi-

original ſo very ridiculous, that they are things more to be laugh'd at than pityed, which have made me leſs ſerious in this Chapter than I thought to have been, or perhaps will be counted agreeable to the perfect Rules of *Gravity* and *Modeſty*; and truly I am very much aſhamed to handle this Subject any longer.

Before I finiſh this Chapter, I muſt deſire the Courteous Reader to take notice, that in all this Diſcourſe there is not any thing ſpoken with the leaſt deſign or intention to bring *Old Age* into contempt; for I always held *that* to be a thing that merits the greateſt *Eſteem*, *Honour* and *Veneration* imaginable. But let all Old Perſons take this along with them, that it will ever be counted baſe and contemptable,

temptable, and a Curse instead of a Blessing, while *it* wants the Ornamental Marks of *Gravity*, *Judgment* and *Discretion*, which always ought to carefully attend it, and be inseparable; and that a merry Old Fool, and a gay apish Matron are things so unnatural, that a very Ingenious Person has deservedly reckoned them among the tamer sort of Monsters.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Againſt Perſons Marrying without the Parents or Friends Conſent.

THE main deſign of this Chapter is to ſhew the great imprudence and impiety of all ſuch as run raſhly, or without Friends knowledg or conſent, upon ſuch a ſolemn thing as *Matrimony*; with the ſad and fatal conſequences thereof; which will be enough, I'm ſure, to deter all Perſons of any Senſe or Religion from ſtealing of *Matches*, or ſuffer themſelves to be ſtolen by others. This is a great and abominable Crime which

which has grown wonderful common in theſe late times; and for ought we can hear more frequent in our Nation, than in our Neighbouring Countries, eſpecially for the Female Sex, becauſe they are allowed more Liberty here, than in moſt other *Parts*. Though within theſe few Years there hath ſomewhat more care been taken to prevent theſe Inconveniencies, and *Licences* have been more cautiouſly deliver'd; yet ſtill we find frequent Examples of this nature to the great Misfortunes of the Perſons themſelves, and ſometimes to the Ruin of their Families. And we can't expect it will be otherwiſe, as long as there are ſome at every turn ready in the *Dukes-Place*, the *Mint*, or ſome ſuch Priviledg'd corner of the Town,

Town, who will do this ſmall Job of *Coopling* without the inconſiderable formality of a *Licence*, or the little conſideration of the *Canonical Hour*.

I ſhall firſt ſpeak a word or two concerning ſuch Men as ſteal Perſons much above themthemſelves in *Fortune*, (for I can afford ſuch vile Practices no better title than ſtealing.) For though this at preſent is reckon'd little or no fault in the Man's part, and the moſt ridgid and cenſorious part of the World ſeldom lay any thing to his charge: Yet for my part I can moſt clearly and plainly ſee ſomething in it that's moſt *baſe* and *ungenerous*, which is far beneath the great and noble Thoughts of *Man*. For to pretend *Love* in this caſe, is almoſt as ridiculous as the *Tay-*

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for that very fairly fell in Love with Queen *Elizabeth*; so that the Person can have no manner of Colour for his *Design in hand* but a greedy thirsting after *Money*, and an eager persuing after those *Riches* which he hath no sort of Title to, and gets 'em as unjustly as Pirates and Robbers do their Booty. Besides, to *Marry* purely for *Money*, without any other considerations, seldom fails of causing an unhappy Life: And common Experience shews us that such Persons as these have very seldom any manner of real *Love* or *Kindness* for their *Wives*, though they be never such Accomplish'd, Beautiful and Deserving Ladies; then to what a fine pass have these poor Creatures brought themselves to?

Let

Let all your High Lookers, and great Pretenders to large *Fortunes* but ſeriouſly conſider, *Firſt*, What a vaſt piece of *Injuſtice* 'tis to Rob a *Loving Father* of a *Daughter* in which he places ſo great a part of his *Delight*; to take his deereſt *Jewel* from him; and violently to tear a lovely Blooming *Sprig*, which he has Nuriſhed with ſo much care and tenderneſs: And though the Night promiſes well, the Horſe ſtands at the Gate, the Doors open, the Riding-Grown's on, the Lady ready, the Parſon waiting, and all things ſmile and favour the Deſign, running very ſmothly a long; yet in a ſhort time after they are chain'd together, the Magick ceaſeth, the Inchanted Caſtle Vaniſhes into fleeting Air; the Tempeſt riſes, and whole

ſhowers

showers of Afflictions fall thick, imbittering all their Joys, and destroying all their fine expectations. *Secondly*, Let them all consider what a high piece of *Imprudence* 'tis for a man so dangerously to venture himself with a young Creature, whose fickle Fancy turns like the wind, and whose ungrounded Love oft upon such accounts meet with its cold and loathing Fits, and curdles to Hatred in a few hours time, which by the overswaying power of flattering and and threatning Friends may bring his Life at her Mercy. Besides, if he marry such when her *Portion* is not certain, he commits a double Folly to no purpose; and then his *Love for Mony* has left him in a very sweet pickle indeed.

But now to come a little closer to the business of *Marrying without Friends consent*, and to shew the greatness of this Offence. It always ought to be considered that *Nature* has given to *Parents* an extraordinary Power over their *Children*, making far greater distinctions here than in any other Persons whatsoever. And as this sort of *Government* is certainly the most natural of any, so all other *Governments* seem rather to have been made in imitation of this *First Method*; being for the most part *Acquired* by Usurpation and meer force, and increased by the Strength and Policy of more crafty heads. As *Parents* Authority is great, so ought *Childrens* Obedience to be great too; and all the Amends and Satisfaction they are

ever

ever able to make for their *bringing of them into the World*, *Education*, *Estates*, and the like, is only a dutiful complyance to all their just Commands, and a hearty desire of performing all their good Wishes. Here it is that a Young Man shews his noble temper, as well as humble disposition; and 'tis this that *Heaven* promises such peculiar Blessings to, and that the *World* has so oft crown'd with its just Applauses.

As *Marriage* is the greatest concern, and the Principal thing in which a *Parent* always takes most care; and to see them well Matched is as much as to see 'em made happy: So for a Son or a Daughter to be disobedient to this, is the greatest piece of *Rebellion*, as well as the highest point of *Ingratitude* they

can well be guilty of. This indeed has made many a *Father* (and that with Juſtice too) utterly caſt off a hot-brain Son from all his future care; and whoſe unlucky *Curſes* have hit him ſo right, and ſtuck ſo cloſe to him ever after, as have driven him to the utmoſt Miſeries that attend Poverty and Rags. The greatneſs of this Crime few young Perſons conſider, eſpecially ſince they are commonly ſo extreamly partial and ſelf-conceited of their own *Prudence* and *Judgment* in chooſing; laughing at their own *Parents* and *Friends*, thinking them all very unfit Perſons to conſult withal, and not Good or Wiſe enough to chooſe for them; but will run madly and furiouſly on, big with the expectation of ſome wonderful

Charms

Charms and extraordinary *Bliſs*, till they are ſoon foundred and loſt, like one that rides a fiery Steed that ſtops at nothing but runs at Swelling Rivers, Craggy Rocks and Deadly Precipices, till the Rider is hurl'd off and daſhed in pieces. Theſe are the furious tranſports of Harebrain Youth, who run mad for a *Face*, and ruin themſelves for a meer *triſle*.

If all things be throughly and carefully conſidered, ſuch a Crime as this muſt appear extraordinary foul and infamous, and of ſuch a Baſe Nature as can never be excuſed by an unconcerned Stander by, ſuch as I profeſs my ſelf to be. To have a kind indulgent *Father*, whoſe ſofteſt Wiſhes, and greateſt Joys, always attend his *Sons* good Fortune; careful of him

even to the raging Paſſion of Jealouſie, to beſtow his utmoſt Pains, uſe his greateſt endeavours, and ſtill racking his contriving Head both day and night; and all with the joyful expectation of his *Sons* being great and happy after his death, and placing the greateſt part of his own Happineſs in his: then to have a ſtubborn ungrateful *Son* to daſh and overturn the whole Fabrick of his great Deſigns, and by one unlucky Caſt, blaſt all his thriving hopes at once. This is too much for a *Father* to bear, and then 'tis no wonder to ſee a *Parent* (tho never ſo gentle and good Natured) decree the utmoſt ſeveritys, and at one blow to lop off a Monſtrous Excreſcency.

That

That this Offence is punished with *Disinheritance*, there's scarce any thing more common; and a *Father* in this case is very seldom much blamed, or reckoned severe or unjust; for when a *Son* or *Daughter* have by their Disobedience broke their *Fathers* Heart, and and have thrown him off as a Person that has nothing to do with them; he has a good and honest Plea to leave them to themselves. Some *Fathers* indeed are often glad to find such an *Excuse* when they have a mind to put off their *Daughters* without *Portions*, because they are sure that *this* will certainly vindicate their Proceedings to the inquiring World. So that it is most apparent that this is a far greater Crime than most young People take it to

be; ſo that for a man of *Ingenuity* and *Generoſity* to be guilty of ſuch a fault, to me ſeems very inconſiſtant. Neither can I well conceive how a man of ſenſe can ever excuſe himſelf from ſuch a prodigious piece of *Ingratitude*, ſince *that* of all other Vices is juſtly eſteem'd the baſeſt and meaneſt, and of ſuch a Nature, that even thoſe Perſons who have ſeemed to make their buſineſs and deſign to act and brag of all other Rogueries, are yet aſhamed of *that*, and are very careful to conceal it, as a *thing* that can get them no manner of Commendation or Applauſe, not ſo much as among their rude Companions.

But let us now ſpend a thought or two about the *Female Sex*. As for *thoſe*, *Nature* has ſeem'd to

to take a more peculiar Care in moulding them and making them more eaſie and compliant; and of giving them a ſofter and more flexible Diſpoſition, finely adapted to Obedience. But to the *Male* it has afforded a ſtronger and more governing Nature, and has given them more Power and Command. Therefore Obedience and Compliance in the *Female* ſeems more convenient and neceſſary, as being more ſuitable and natural. And if all things be rightly conſidered, they are not to expect to be their own Carvers in all things, nor to have ſo large a right in chooſing as *Men*. Their Friends Care and Judgment is always rationally looked upon as far more fit and proper for the choice of what will be for

their happineſs and Well-being, than their own fond Humours, which proceed from an unſetled Fancy. So that their main and principal care in this Life ought to be how to ſoften thoſe troubles, and how to make that pleaſant and eaſie which falls to their ſhare, if they ſhould chance to meet with a *Perſon* and *Humours*, not altogether ſo well and agreeable as might have reaſonably been wiſhed for.

The truth of all this will eaſily appear, and become as clear as the Sun, if we come carefully to conſider and reflect upon the Unſteady Nature and Unſatisfied Diſpoſition of *Youth*, and eſpecially of the *Female Sex*, whoſe Reaſons are for the moſt part byaſſed by their Humours, and not ſtrong enough

to

to discern and search it to those things which are best for a *Setled* and *Married* Life. For their Fancies are almost always carrying them aloft, which makes their Brains giddy, overruling their Reasons, and leading them about through by-Paths and uncertain Places, like an *Ignis Fatuus*, and at last looses them in a wild desolate Wilderness. It will be much more apparent and visible, if we look upon *Examples*, which frequently shews us how extreamly unfortunate many young *Women* are in their choice, when it has depended wholly upon themselves. And further, it is very common to find those very Ladies that have been so extreamly *nice*, so wonderfully *curious* and difficult to please, disdaining and laughing at all

that

that look like the *Vulgar*, and ſcorning and diſpiſing all that ſeem *mean* or *common*; ſo that one would think, nothing leſs could ſatisfie them than an *Angel* dropt from the Clouds: Yet (I ſay) 'tis very uſual for theſe *Mock-Criticks* at laſt, to throw themſelves under the ſubjection of Whimſical Flutring *Fop*, or a meer ſtarched and joynted Bartholomew Puppet, whoſe Stock of Wit and Mony is as ſmall as his Impertinence and Impudence is large.

If we do but obſerve the generality of the Young Ladies of this our Age, who pretend ſo much to *Modiſhneſs* and the like; we cannot but wonder to find ſo many Inconſiſtencies, and to ſee with what large mixtures of *Fickleneſs*, *Unconſtancy*, *Vanity* and *Unſetled Fondneſs*

ness they are made up withal. How difficult to please, how critical in foolish trifles, how Extravagant and Finnical in their Attire; how wonderfully delighted with all that's gay and glittering, how strangely ubounding in Discourse, how toyish and freakish in their Actions; having vitiated Palates that can relish nothing that's Grave or Serious, or can endure any thing that's prudent or discreet: We may (I say) when we consider all this, well enough conclude that that Person who courts one of them, and desires to gain her, needs only a gay lac'd Coat rather than a decent one, to please her nice Fancy; an Impertinent Tongue (like Sir *Formal Trifles*) overlaid with Fustian and Bombast Words rather than

than ſenſe, to hold her in diſcourſe; and a Maggotiſh Noddle well ſtuffed with Impudence (like Sir *Poſitive at all*) to make her believe any thing.

Upon ſuch ſort of Perſons as theſe, common experience ſhews us that *Dancing-Maſters* and *Singing-Maſters* have chiefly the greateſt influence; the one by the nimble ſhaking of his Heels, and the other by the cunning quavering of his Voice, ſo melting and charming the poor Fool, that ſhe's all upon the ſighing whining Vein, till ſhe's ſtark mad to be delivered from her old Fathers Clutches. And this is much more likely if Age has not ſtrengthned her Reaſon, or ripened her Underſtanding ſo far as to diſtinguiſh between gay things

things and good things, and to diſcern the fatal effects of ſuch Baſeneſs: and this brings her to laugh at the kind and wholeſome advices of a *Father*, and to look upon her *Friends* as all peeviſh, ſilly and inconſiderate Perſons that deſerve not a ſerious thought to be thrown away upon them. After this indeed Years may harden her in her wickedneſs, and help her to a large ſtock of Impudence, but they ſeldom teach her any Prudence or Diſcretion, for her ridiculous Follies and ſtubborn Vices will yet grow ſtronger with her Age; like gliding Rivers and flowing Streams, ſtill encreaſing the further they run from the Fountain-head. But the poor ſelf-deceiving Creature ſeldom looks about her, till the manifeſt appearance of approaching.

ing Ruin from an inhumane curſt Husband opens her Eyes to ſome purpoſe, and ſhew her that all the Wit and Experience ſhe have got are the dearest things ſhe ever purchaſed before now.

Thus we find many ſad Examples of this Nature, of ſeveral Young Perſons who run raſhly and without any ſort of Conſideration to get themſelves married, never minding any thing that belongs to ſuch a Condition, but thoſe vain flattering Pleaſures that their deluded hopes preſent to their diſtant view through a corrupted and falſe *medium*. 'Tis often ſeen that many a poor Young Girl is trickt and cheated into *Matrimony* to the great grief of her Parents, and her own laſting Torment; and that

too

too when she has but a small knowledge of the troublesome cares and concerns of this World, and before she well understand what a *Husband* means, or what and where lyes the Conveniencies and Inconveniencies that a Married Life is capable of. And perhaps the Person that did it is some debauched beggarly Rakehel, some base ungenerous Fellow, whose *Dunghil Passion* will never raise his drowsie Soul above the smell of *dirst*; and desires nothing but *Mony*, which he so greedily devours and swallows down to his Wives ruine, and his own Destruction.

Now the main Source from whence these Passions (on the mans account) do rise, and the chief Spring that moves so many young mens Affections, and hur-

hurries away their Reaſons from paying the Reſpects due to their *Parents*, is *Beauty*; an Object that always carrys ſomething with it ſo excellent and Charming, as can never be well defined or deſcribed. And 'tis *this* that ſo many times ſets Unſteady Youth all in a raging fire, ſo violently toſſing his tempeſtuous Soul, and ſo forcibly carrys him on towards his *Imaginary Bliſs*, that the loud crys of *Reaſon* can never be heard, but only when it comes with a gentle ſmile, to favour the cauſe in hand, and plead for that ſoft Paſſion: and this cauſes them ſometimes to be ſo extravagant as to make *Goddeſſes* of Women (*Angels* at leaſt) and place even *Divinity* it ſelf in a poor ſilly Mortal. Then you'l hear nothing

thing from him but *Wishing*, *Complaining*, *Sighing*, *Languishing* and *Dispairing*; of *Charming Pleasures*, *Gentle Flames*, *Broken Hearts*, *Melting Tears*, and the like; and all his Discourse shall be about his *Mistress*, of vindicating her to all the World, of undertaking all desperate Attempts, and Dying for her three or four times a Day. These things, tho foolish enough, are true, and oft deserve more Pity than Laughter; for *Beauty* the chief cause of all this, is like a cruel *Basilisk* that often kills us at distance, and before we know any thing of it.

The Old Men indeed come bluntly to their Sons, and tell them that *Beauty will buy no Beef*; (a course Complement to one up to the Ears in Love)

But

But the Young Men as pertly reply, *It will buy Content which is far better*; an Anſwer truly ſufficient, and of full force we grant, if it were as true as the other. But this we frequently find ſo far from procuring any real ſatisfaction or *Content*, that it has many times been the primary Cauſe of the greateſt Miſeries and Afflictions that can befall a *Marryed Life*. And if Prejudice be wholly laid aſide, 'twill eaſily be ſeen that ſcarce ever any *Marriage* has been on both ſides happy, that had no other Foundation than what comes from the Charms of outſide *Beauty*; which indeed is far more fit to increaſe a Mans Appetite, than to ſettle any true Liking, and will ſooner procure Fondneſs than real Love; the fatal Effects of which

is

is *Jealouſie*, that curſed Bane to all the Pleaſures of the *Marriage-Bed*, which makes their beſt Delights a raging Torment, and turns the greateſt Bleſſings into the greateſt Plagues. So that to have *this* without Virtue, is a thing that none but ſtupid and ſenſleſs Perſons would endure; For then 'tis like a hot burning Coal whoſe bright and ſparkling looks many may gaze on with admiration enough, but none but Fools and Madmen are willing or daring enough to touch. For who but ſuch a Madman would for the gratifying of his fancy run and throw himſelf into the devouring Flames? Who for a few tranſient fits of Joy would part with all the Pleaſures of his ſoft and ſweet Repoſe? Who for the Honour of Embracing

a paint-

a painted Cloud, would forfeit both his Heaven of Content here, and his Heaven of Happiness hereafter, by being always upon the rack of *Jealousie*, and tormenting Fears, least his Beautiful *Jezebel* prove false, and another admire that Phantastical Face which he himself formerly doated on.

Let us consider *Beauty* by its self, and quite stript of all those Ornaments she borrows from the Arts and Tricks of others; for her upper Decorations she gets from common *Shop keepers* and *Tyre-women*, her lower ones from *Taylors* and *Brokers*, and her sweet ravishing Complexion very often from a little Stuff that comes from a *Painters* Pencil, which sometimes dawbs her over like a Sign Post. There uniting all their

their Force do dress her up as gay as possible, and are as extravagant (if it can be) as our unbounded Fancies. I say, if we seriously reflect on all this, we should not find *it* so considerable as to make us forget our greatest Blessings our Freedoms to enjoy *it*; nor yet so permanent as to make us hope for any lasting Pleasures from *it*. For when 'tis never so natural, a small fit of *Sickness* oft takes away the superficial part of it, and a *few years*, *Children*, and *Ill Nature* do take away all the rest of the varnished Features. Then the hot fit of Passion soon turns to the cold one of loathing; and all those *soft Joys* and *charming Pleasures*, which raging and unruly Desires expected to meet withal, dull *Fruition* and *Experience* finds absent,

ſent, and nothing left but a rotten decayed Veſſel, bereft of all that's good, and emptied of all its Delights. So that Young Perſons are under a very ſtrange miſtake when they think *Beauty* alone can make any *Marriage* happy; for this they may be moſt certain of, that whatſoever *Love* has no ſtrönger legaments than what proceed from *thence* (beſides the Racks of *Doubts* and *Jealouſies* which ſo often attend it) can never laſt any longer than *that* will; no more than that Love which is grounded on *Mony*, can outlaſt the ſpending of it.

There are ſeveral other things beſides *Beauty*, which makes many a Woman be loved and admired, and oft cauſe Young Perſons to tranſgreſs the Duty they

they owe to their *Parents*; as *Good Nature*, a fine *Carriage*, a *quick Wit*, and a *ſweet Voice*: and all theſe have each their peculiar Charms, and are admired by many men (and perhaps with juſtice too) as much as *Beauty* it ſelf. Yet for all that, when every one of theſe unite their Power and Forces, and meet together in one Woman (which is certainly as ſtrong and mighty temptation for Youth to encounter withal) they are many times misfortunes (when abſtracted from vertue) rather than Advantages, and Plagues rather than Bleſſings, *there* being all to be found in many a common *Proſtitute*, and in the very worſt of Women. Neither indeed can theſe procure any manner of ſatisfacti-

on or real content, when *true Love*, *Vertuous Inclinations*, and a *Competency* are wanting; the two former being abſolutely neceſſary to make firm their Happineſs, and keep it ſo perpetually; and the latter to gain Friends conſents, and to crown all their Joys.

Now what man in his right wits that has the leaſt grain of conſideration in him, would ever be ſo groſly ſilly and ſenſleſs as to marry a Woman (though endowed with all the forementioned Charms) that he knew for certain did not really love him, or had not Vertue or Honour to continue that Love? Certainly he can have no manner of regard to his Quiet and Happineſs in this Life; or muſt be

be most strangely ignorant of the means and way to it, who shall thus foolishly plunge himself into the midst of an Ocean of *Doubts*, which will be a devouring Torment and a perpetual Rack to his Mind, if he has any thing of Life or Soul in him. Yet he that marries a Person without his *Parents* consent, (the want of an Estate being supposed to hinder their consent) though perhaps he is not absolutely certain his Mistress don't love him, yet he can never be certain she does, or that she don't love his *Mony* far better than himself, which if he knows he's doubly mad to marry her. For when all such Persons first set their hearts upon *that* (as it is most frequent in this case) they mind

little elſe but thoſe ill Properties and ridiculous vanities, that all mean Perſons ſo much ſeek after; and what is more uſual than to have *Mercinary Spirits* ſoon loſe all ſenſe of *Generoſity* or Gratitude?

Some Perſons are of Opinion, that if they marry with them of Inferiour Rank, they can manage them as they pleaſe; and do verily believe that *gratitude* will always be a ſufficient Obligation to bind them to all *Affection*, *Love*, *Reſpect* and *Obedience*; and by this means they propoſe to themſelves ſtrange and wonderful things, and their contrivances the beſt ordered, and the moſt ingeniouſly invented that can be for their quiet and content. But ſuch a Perſon

ſon ought to be put among the Cautious Sir *Solomons* Projectors, and be ſure to meet with no better luck than he; for this is a vain and fooliſh ſuppoſition, fit for only the unthinking part of the World, and contradicting all common Experience. For that conſtantly ſhews us that he that takes his Maid for his *Conſort*, finds her no leſs Proud and Imperious, than he that marries with one of the Higheſt Rank; nay very oftentimes more; for all Baſe Born Inferiour Perſons (though naturally of a Diſpoſition good enough) are ſtrangely changed and altered by ſuch Honours, as being ſo much above their Companions; which makes them have a vaſt conceit of their own Worth and Merits, their Pride

and Inſolency encreaſing to that degree as they become altogether inſupportable; while better Educations are far more noble and generous, being apter to own Obligations.

Not to inſiſt too long upon this Head, nor to be too tedious on this Subject; in ſhort, all Young Perſons whatſoever may obſerve and take this for a moſt certain and undeniable Truth, that they neither have nor can have a power of diſpoſing of themſelves as they pleaſe, as long as their *Parents* or *Friends* intruſted by them are alive, and they have any manner of dependence upon them; and let their Inclinations and Deſires be how they will, they cannot enter into ſuch a ſolemn and ſacred Inſtitution as *Matri-*

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mony of their own accord without their *Parents* consent; they being so far part of their Goods (and the cleareſt and moſt valuable too) that to give themſelves away unknown to *them*, is a kind of Robbery or Theft, or perhaps ſomething worſe. This is a Crime which they can never anſwer to God or Good Men; for a *Marriage* is not real or truly compleat according to God's Laws, till *Parents* by their conſent make firm the Contract. And this is the common Opinion of the chief of our Divines, as far as I can underſtand.

But ſome perhaps whoſe ungoverned Paſſions have wholly led them away, will pretend that the ſoft *Allurements*, and

ſweet *Temptations* of *Beauty*, *Good Nature*, *Wit* and the like, have been ſo very ſtrong and powerful, that they have not been able in any manner to reſiſt them. I will not examine how Humane Nature may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have power of encountring *there*; but however this Pretence will never ſerve, ſince the venturing to ſtand the brunt and force of *them*, and of favouring of *Opportunities*, is one of their Principal Faults. For *thoſe* above all things, are ever to be moſt carefully and cunningly avoided; and ſhunned as the moſt dangerous Infections; and like a full neſt of inraged Hornets, diſturbed by ſome unwary Traveller, more to be fled from than fought withall. Beſides *temptation*

tion is a poor pretence that every common *Prostitute* makes use of to extenuate and excuse her filthy Lusts, and every Perjured Villain to uphold his Rogueries; and if this would hold good, the greatest Wickedness in the World might go unregarded, and Crimes of the highest and blackest nature go still unpunished.

Therefore let Children consider and dread the Unhappy Consequences of all such *Matches*, as their own Rashness and most Unruly Desires leads them to; whose beginnings are commonly with the violent and hot flames of Love, and do soon turn to the sad and cold fits of Loathing. By this means it is com-

mon for a Man to have a tormenting *Wife* that plagues and hates him, ſtubborn and rebellious *Children* that deſpiſe and ſcorn him, an *Eſtate* quite ſhattered and waſted, his Unhappy Self upon the very brink of certain *Ruin*, not knowing how to avoid or eſcape it, and all the time perhaps the hatred and anger of his unreconciled *Parents*; which laſt will always be as a devouring and gnawing Worm, and a clog of ſome weight to his diſtracted Soul. For *Diſobedience* (the fatal cauſe of their troubles) is an aſperſion ſo very vile and ugly, that nothing but Time and Repentance can wipe off in this World. And therefore once more let me earneſtly deſire and adviſe all

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Young Persons whatsoever to have a more than ordinary care of such things, and that their *Stubbornes* and *Disobedience* do not pull down *God's* just vengeance, and their *Parents* curses upon their Head.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Against Persons Marrying without their own Consent.

PArents I do not doubt but will be well enough pleased with most of the Passages of the former Chapter, since that speaks so much in behalf of their Prerogative, and against *Childrens Disobedience*; but I am afraid they'l scarce relish this following Chapter, nor well digest a business which touches them so nearly; for this treats of the last sort of *Unequal Marriages*, in which they themselves are the prin-

principal Actors and are moſt guilty, namely of marrying their Children without their Conſents, or againſt their Wills. We may obſerve that every Perſon is very angry and uneaſie when he comes to ſee his own vile Practices and Vices laid open to the cenſuring World; but above all, Old Perſons take it moſt grievouſly, becauſe their high conceit of their own Experience leads them to believe themſelves beyond doing of Injuries, or at leaſt of deſerving to be cenſured.

I am now arrived and juſt entring upon a moſt ſad and Malancholly Subject, and I cannot but beſtow a few ſerious reflections and ſome mournful thoughts upon it;

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a Subject that many are apt to ſtart at, and cannot endure ſo much as to hear it once mentioned, having experimentally found the ſad and fatal Effects of it, either in themſelves or their Relations. And this is a *Curſe* that mean and Inferiour Perſons are ſeldom or never liable to, and are but very rarely troubled with the Misfotunes that ſo commonly attend it. But *this* very frequently accompanies the Gaudy Pomps and Airy Noiſe of *Magnificence*, *Grandure* and *Riches*, ſtill aiming and ſtriking at great and lofty Places, whilſt little ones commonly eſcape free; like the ordinary and common Diſeaſes which proceed from Luxury, being ſtarved at Cottages do always ſhun them, and inhabit Courts and

and Palaces. So that this is a thing that lights more upon the heads of Great Persons Children than others, and that too upon the *Female Sex* more commonly than the *Male*.

As for the greatness of this Injury, there's nothing more apparent; being such, that all the pains and cares that a *Parent* is able to take or perform for a *Child* in this sad case, can never make amends, or give any reasonable satisfaction, the Misfortune being often so large and compleat, that it is beyond the Power of Man to relieve, or give ease to: Tho a *Married Life* is very often found to be the happiest and most comfortable of all others; yet when it comes to begin thus dismally,

it mostly proves the worst of all conditions whatsoever, and is very often one of the greatest Plagues that can well befall a Man, making their conditions more sad and miserable than the poorest Wretches who beg bread from door to door: and this may be confirmed sufficiently by too many lamentable and deplorable Examples of this kind. So that a Wise and Thinking Man (especially if he comes to consider the great sins that constantly attend it) would sooner choose the baseſt and meanest *Imployments*, and most contemptible of all *callings*, than endure those restless Tortures, that so necessarily belong to all such Unfortunate *Matches*.

For

For a *Parent* to bring up his *Child* with all the kindness, tenderness and care imaginable; to be always ready to instruct him in every good and vertuous Exercise; to be most exact in teaching him all the excellent and noble Accomplishments which his *Condition*, *Estate* and *Quality* so much deserve; to suffer him in, and to procure him all the moderate and Innocent Pleasures and Recreations that may be had; and to indulge him and love him as his own Soul, is a thing tho frequently yet very commendable, and is something that will bind a generous Disposition far stronger than the Obligations that proceed from *Power*, *Fear* and con-

conſtrained *Obedience*. But then for ſuch a *Parent* by his over violent zeal, and too eager deſire after his *Sons* Happineſs, by an unlucky blow to ruin him at once beyond all relief, is a thing moſt ſtrange, unaccountable and prodigious. I am extreamly ſorry that I can truly ſay, 'tis a thing that has been often done and practiſed; and that too by ſuch *Parents*, whoſe good *Reputations*, *Gravity*, *Prudence* and *Ingenuity*, would have ſpoke far better things for them, and (one would have thought) might have taught them more *Vertue*, *Piety* and *Honeſty*, or at leaſt more *Wit* and *Diſcretion*, than out of a fooliſh Humour, ſcarce worthy of ſuch a care, to imbitter their Childrens Happineſs, and entail

tail Misery upon their Families for succeeding Ages.

When I come to consider the strange cares and troubles that *Parents* have for their *Childrens* sake, 'tis then, and only then, that I am ready to think almost all *Marriages* unhappy and unfortunate: but on the other side when I look upon the sweet comforts and pleasant satisfaction they receive from their good behaviour, and their hopes they feed themselves withal of their proving well, when they see nothing to the contrary; I find those are Engines strong and powerful enough to hold them up, and to keep them from sinking under a load of cares and concerns. *Parents* Lives are often like those of *Poets* and

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Gameſters, who can very rarely arrive to the pleaſure of being cool and at reſt; their buſie Souls and overwhelm'd Deſires are continually in flame, which never ſuffers them to have a calm and even temper, but makes them always either in Raptures or Diſpair, according as their good or bad Fortune requires it. 'Tis their overdoing of things which commonly ruins their Deſigns, and breaks all their meaſures; *their* exceſs of *Love* makes their *Children* bold, impudent and ſauſie; their overmuch *Care* and deſire for them, makes them idle, careleſs and undutiful; the *Jealouſie* makes them miſtruſtful, diſdainful and to hate and ſlight their Commands; and their *Rigidneſs* cramps and deſtroys all their gene-

generous thoughts, and corrupts the Morals. Yet they think many times they can mould them as they please, and incline their minds as they think fit; and because they suppose their *Children do not know what is good for themselves*, their threats must drive them to it, which destroys the very essence and nature of *Good* of Marriage; and when they have once got them coupled to an *Estate* and a few *Titles*, they think they have done all; tho perhaps they have undone all, and ruined them to all intents and purposes.

That no man might think that I have said any thing out of Ill Will or Prejudice, I do freely and sincerely declare, that I have so good

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an Opinion of all *Parents*, and particularly of theſe ſorts I am treating of, that I cannot ſo much as ſuppoſe any of them to deſire, or heartily wiſh their *Children* the leaſt Hurt or Injury, much leſs their laſting Miſery or Ruin; (tho we find ſeveral upon the account of Faults and Diſobedience, to have put extraordinary ill things upon their *Children*, and ſuch as they themſelves muſt needs know to be hard and cruel) But when I go about to aquit them of this Vice, I muſt of neceſſity accuſe them of an inſufferable piece of Folly (beſides a horrible Sin which I ſhall mention to them by and by) when they think to make that *Match* happy which begins with hatred and loathing; and this is a ridiculous thing which men

men of their Age and Experience can never be ſuppoſed to be ignorant of. They may as well hope to ſee the Poles of the Heavens meet, or make Fire and Water agree, as the Loves, Inclinations and Affections of ſome Perſons. Young Peoples Humours and Paſſions are very often ſtrange and ungovernable, and ſuch as are impoſſible to unite; and *Fathers* are not to imagine that their *Children* are like Trees, in which they can graft different Humours and Inclinations, as well as different Fruits.

But ſome *Parents*, who beginning to perceive and reflect upon the miſerable and deplorable Effects of the hard and ſevere Uſage, their Pity flowing in a-pace, do ſtill flatter them-

themſelves with the hopes that *time* ſhould eaſe them, and help to ſet all to rights again. And this is the common and threadbare Pretence that all *Parents* make uſe of to excuſe their Severity and Injuſtice; for, ſay they, *tho the Wound be wide and troubleſom, yet the Cure is not very hard; time and balmy Blood, with a little care, will make all well again.* But ſad Experience confutes this, and ſhews it to be altogether falſe and frivolous; for we conſtantly find that length of *times* and *days* do very rarely produce any ſort of cure for this Diſtemper (as it has been often hoped for) but for the moſt part rather encreaſing the Torment; for theſe Wounds are like the breaches of Ships and Veſſels which time only

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makes wider, but can never ſtop up; which as the frequent and common Diſeaſes of *Old Age* and *Years*, growing worſe and worſe, till kind Death comes and puts an end to all. Only ſometimes we happen of an Ingenious Pious Perſon, who has got the *Stoical* knack of ſlighting all troubles and caring for nothing, and to eaſe himſelf in this caſe will be ſure to cauſe his Wives *Money* to gingle, make havock on her *Caſh*, and the Yellow Boys fly merrily about like dirt, in his Cups once ran home to beſtow three or four or half a dozen genteel curſes upon his kind hearted *Parents* by way of thanks; and briskly and finely paſs away his time among the honourable Society of *Chimney Sweepers* and *Porters*.

As for *Emperors*, *Kings* and ſuch kind of Perſons as thoſe, I ſhall not dare to preſume to meddle withall, or concern my ſelf in this caſe; nor will I venture to determine any thing in the Myſterious Matters of State: But to all others I muſt take the boldneſs to tell them that this is a very heinous Offence, and piece of Wickedneſs, that can never be let paſs unregarded. They indeed may make the Miniſter joyn their hands, but the *Marriage* can never be compleat or lawful till their hearts be joyned too; this being a moſt perfect violation of their Native *Freedom*, and to be forced this way is the worſt and moſt miſerable of all ſlaveries. Neither can theſe *Parents*

rents any ways acquit themselves of making their *Children* guilty of two mortal and most abominable Sins, namely *Perjury* and *Treachery*, and those of the baseſt and blackeſt Die too. For let any man ſeriouſly conſider and ſee if they can find or imagine a greater and groſſer *Perjury*, than to make the moſt ſacred and moſt ſolemn *Vow* that can be thought of, in the aweful preſence of *God* and the whole *Congregation*, to a thing that is abſolutely falſe? Or indeed how can there be a baſer piece of *Treachery*, than to make ſuch a ſolemn *Vow*, when they neither can or will keep it; and in a concern upon which ſo nearly depends all that's good and happy in this world.

For my part, when I come to consider the greatness of these Crimes, I can but tremble, and am amazed at the very thoughts of such Monstrous Impieties as these; and can but strangely wonder how either *Parents* or *Children* dare so much as appear in such a horrid Business, and are not afraid of the *Divine Vengeance* in the very Act. For certain Experience shews us, that things done with so much *Precaution*, *Consideration* and *Solemnity*, always strike a most sad and deep terror in mens hearts, more than sins commonly practised, though never so great and heinous. This most sacred Order of *Matrimony* is not to be plaid withall, passed slightly over, or made

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made a common property for *Private Interest*, but there ought to be a wonderful deal of Caution and Care in it. And when a *Match* begins with two such shameful Crimes as these; 'tis no wonder at all if the *Almighty* sends his Plagues upon their heads, punishing *Parents* in beholding their *Childrens* Miseries, and *Children* in feeling the deadly effects of their own *Perjuries*: nor is it strange if the Devil be suffered to sow his cursed Dissentions among them, and keeping them at such a vast distance that nothing can reasonably be expected but Despair and Desolation.

Now a main and Principal Cause of all these troubles and disturbances, and that makes

Old Men ſo raging mad and deſperately hot, is *Mony*; a thing which always commanded, ruled and governed the more degenerate and baſer part of the World as it pleaſed, bringing them wholly and entirely to its own Devotion, and making them hazard all Troubles and Dangers, Honours and Reputations, and their very Bodies and Souls; and all in hopes of obtaining Favours from, and enjoying that *Bright Beauty*. This 'tis that caſts ſuch a deadly miſt, and blinds *Parents* Eyes, perverts their Reaſons, and corrupts their Underſtandings ſo much, that all Great and Generous Thoughts, all Glorious and Noble Deſigns are clog'd, pul'd down and deſtroyed; ſo that by this means they

they become so sordid and dull, as they cannot distinguish between the best and worst things. 'Tis for *this* that many a *Father* toyls and torments himself, racks and disturbs his Plotting Brains, for a stubborn ungracious *Son*, who won't so much as bestow upon him the ordinary Complement of Thanks, but will spend and and make it fly faster than ever they got it. *This* is so sweet and pleasant, that the most ridged *Quaker*, and most precise *Puritan*, who will scarce permit or endure the most common and innocent *Recreations*, yet they shall finely recreate and solace themselves with *this*, and hug themselves over their full Bags, whilst Beggars may starve in the streets for all any of them.

Parents do ſtrangely pleaſe themſelves with theſe hopes, and are continually endeavouring to imprint their infectious Notions into their *Children* when they are young, telling them what ſtrange things they may expect from a good *Fortune*, ſo that they may make it their chief Buſineſs to obtain it; for they themſelves believe there is no Happineſs equal to a large *Eſtate*, nor no pleaſure like the ſight of a huge heap of *Guinea's*; ſo that if they can but obtain *this* for their *Children*, they think their own and their Happineſs is perfectly compleat. But this a vain and ridiculous conceit, which whole Multitudes pleaſe themſelves withall; for *Riches*, if we conſider the many ſlaviſh cares and

and troubles that so constantly attend them, are far short of that value that their gay and glittering appearance makes them seem to be. And in truth they are but *Baubles* and meer *Trash* at best if compared with a clear *Unspotted Reputation*, and a true *Contented Soul*; neither will all the Gold in *Peru* purchase one Moment of real Satisfaction to an unsatisfied and disturbed Mind; but will rather serve as a heavy Clog to his dejected Spirits, to plunge him the deeper into a Sea of Sorrows.

Covetousness is a very strange and inconsistant thing, and (as a very Ingenious Gentleman observes) seems not so much a Vice as *a deplorable piece of Madness*; so that I can

reckon it nothing but a tormenting Diſeaſe and plague which is peculiar to ſome ſort of Conſtitutions; and is more Contagious and Epidemical in Old Perſons than the Gout, Stone, or Palſie, and very often a far greater Torment than any of them. In the ſpending *Mony*, I grant there may be ſeveral ſorts of Pleaſures; but in the hoarding of *it* up, and keeping *it* under Lock and Key, (and very often for they know not whom) and making no uſe *on't* at all; for the pleaſure of that, I own it goes beyond my conceptions to imagine, unleſs it be in weighing and telling of *it*, and then I reckon that picking of Straws and catching of Flys are far more noble and innocent Recreations. This however

ever has been always obſerved, that all ſuch Perſons who deſire and love *it* moſt of all, and hug and graſp it cloſeſt, do conſtantly make the leaſt uſe of *it*, and find ſmalleſt comfort and ſatisfaction by it. As for the Pleaſures and Joys that belong to much *Riches*, they are always more imaginary than real, and the *Eaſe* that ſo many expect in the enjoyment of *Mony* is commonly found to be the moſt falſe and Chimerical of all things. And he that eagerly perſues and thirſts after abundance of *Mony*, on'y with that expectation of living a *Quiet* and *Undiſturbed Life*, is as ridiculouſly ſilly as he that hid himſelf in the Water cunningly to avoid a ſhower of Rain.

For my part whenſoever I carefully reflect upon the many ſad *Diſquiets*, *Noyſes*, *Envys* and *Cenſures* that ſo conſtantly attend *Grandeur* and *Riches*; I can but admire that they ſhould be ſo hotly ſought after; and alſo can but heartily pity the ſad and mournful conditions of many excellent Young *Ladies*, who only for the ſake of their *Quality*, *Greatneſs* and *Fortunes*, are forced and driven by the dreadful fears of threatning Ruin, to do that which is directly contrary to their Natures, and which their Souls moſt abhor; and that too by baſe *Uncles* and mercinary *Guardians* (oftentimes the worſt of all People) as well as Parents themſelves. On the other ſide I can but almoſt envy the quiet and moſt happy ſtate of many

many Inferiour Persons, whose *Qualities* and *Fortunes* are so small, as never to prove dangerous to their *Ease*, or be made a trap to their Ruins; and can bless themselves with the sweet satisfaction of Liberty, and with perfect Freedom of Choice, being truly happy in each others Loves and Affections, not teas'd and troubled with those base and contagious Noise of *Sueing for Portions*, *Tenants Complaints*, *Creditor-Duns*, *Neighbours Quarrels*, &c. nor plagued with the naucious Impertinence of a whole Covy of griping *Lawyers* and merciless *Atornys*, and a House full of Writings at every Match.

There is one most ridiculous piece of *Folly* that I have often observed in several *Parents*,

rents, which apparently ſhews that *Mony* has turned and made their Brains ſo muddy, that they are not *right*, that is, they will never conſider of, nor ſuffer any thing, tho never ſo eſtimable and valuable to ſtand in competition with *Mony*, no not ſo much as to make the Scale even. So that by this means none of thoſe noble *Acquiſitions*, and excellent *Accompliſhments* as *Learning*, *Education*, *Nobility*, *Ingenuity Vertue*, *Good Nature*, and the like, ſhall ever be eſteemed of, or thought of any value; whilſt their Grand Idol *Mony*, like a moſt Soveraign and Abſolute *Monarch* ſhall rule the World, and ride Great *Lord* of the Univerſe; the mean time *theſe* ſhall crouch beneath its Feet, and

and be content to go in Rags. This is a piece of *Folly* that one would think People of their *Discretion*, *Experience* and *Prudence* should above all men not be guilty of, being of that Age, as can never be supposed not to know the real value of these forementioned things. For my part I think 'twas most generously and nobly done of the Old Merchant that granted his Daughter to that Ingenious Gentleman who valued his *Education* at fifty thousand Pounds, and his *Barresters Gown* at as much more.

Notwithstanding all that have or could be said by others in the exposing this most manifest piece of *Ignorance* and unthinking *Prejudice*; yet still we see *Parents* run on in their

old perverſe ways, without either *Fear*, *Wit* or *Honeſty*, ſo that neither *Senſe* or *Reaſon* can no more be driven into their Heads than into a Mill Poſt; but ſtill reckoning and judging all their *Childrens* Happineſs by the rule of their own corrupted and byaſſed thoughts, and their depraved and (ſometimes) doating Diſpoſitions; and ſo impertinently cautious it ſeems ſome are, that after their Deaths, the conſent of no leſs than ſix or ſeven muſt be had for the Marriage of a Daughter. Some we find ſo inconſiderate and raſh, that they ſhall willingly chooſe for a Son-in-Law the moſt *Dull*, *Illiterate Blockhead*, the moſt *Sordid Senſleſs Sot*, the moſt *Ill Natur'd Deformed Fellow*, and the moſt *Hor-*

Horrid Wicked Wretch that can be, for the sake of his *Mony*; when at the same time an *Ingenious*, *Vertuous*, and most *Accomplished Gentleman* shall be cast off, and not look'd upon, and for nothing else but that poor and pitiful Reason, *that his Estate was but half so large as the others.* Now let any Person of Common Sence but consider and judge if these be not pitiful Inconsistant *Follies*, beneath any Man that has any manner of Pretences to common *Prudence*, *Piety* or *Honesty*.

There is another Humour I have observed in some *Parents*, which has the strongest tincture of *Baseness* and *Partiality*, that is, they shall use their utmost Power, and be

ſtrangely careful to put off a Daughter to any Pittiful Fellow that has but an *Eſtate* bigger in Proportion than what ſhe's like to have, tho it be never ſo much contrary to his *Parents* conſent; and then at laſt perhaps find ſome fooliſh quibble and ridiculous pretence to fob her off with a few gay Promiſes, and give her nothing at all, eſpecially whilſt he is alive. It would certainly make a very pleaſant Farce but to take notice of and obſerve the many grave *Inſtructions*, cunning *Ways* and ſly *Tricks*, ſuch a Parent makes uſe of to obtain his ends; how wonderfully careful and exact he is in teaching his Daughter her Leſſon, how extraordinary civil he is to the young raw *Gallant*, and how large

large and weighty are his Promiſes, till he once perceives the Gudgeon well hooked; then but to ſee how ſlily the Old Fox gives them the ſlip, leaves them both in the lurtch, and marches off as gravely with an idle Flam to his *Father* as if he knew nothing at all of the Buſineſs.

Yet ſuch a Fellow as this will never endure to hear of a Son to marry one a little below his *Fortune*, tho never ſo deſerving a Woman, but will be always telling him what a vaſt happineſs 'twill be for himſelf, and what a wonderful comfort 'twill be to his Old Father, to ſee him marry a mighty rich Wife. *Ah* Tom! (ſays he) *a Fortune* Tom!

thou look'ſt like a good honeſt Boy; I tell thee there's nothing like a good Fortune at laſt Tom. *Thy Mother was a Fortune* Tom, *elſe Old* Jack *muſt have knock'd under board, and ſhrunk in his head, and been content with making a leſs Figure in the World. Ay but (ſays Tom again) you won't allow me any good Cloaths, nor ſcarce a Shilling in my Pocket, and how ſhall I go to work to get a Fortune? Ah* Tom *(crys the Old Miſer) times are very hard, and Mony is ſtrangely ſcarce; you ſhould learn to be a good Husband* Tom; *I ſave it all for thee Boy. But however ſince I have one in my Eye for thee, thou ſhalt wont for nothing if thou doſt but get her? Ah brave* Tom *Boy! right Fathers nown Boy; ſhant we cheat the Old Fool her Father, Hah*

Boy?

Boy? Upon this perhaps *Tom* gets new Cloaths, and he and his old Father fall to work upon some young Creature much above his *Fortune*, and perhaps gets her and marrys her to the great Grief of all her Relations. But if Matters should chance to come to the Pinch, and to the utmost Extremities that may possibly be in this case; Old *Jack* will be sure to find a trick to slip his own Neck out of the Noose, and leave poor *Tom* fairly to hang for't.

Now are not these and the like things very gross pieces of *partiality* and *injustice*? Yet we frequently find those very *Parents* who are so very hot and violent in exclaiming against the *Impiety* and *Ingrati-*

tude of *Children* that marry without their *Parents* consent; those Persons we often find to be most ready to transgress it themselves in the Persons of others (and that on the basest manner too) when they perceive it is for the advantage of the *Family*. And all their railings and bitter exclaimings against this *Vice*, is only a right down *Forgery* and *Cheat*, a pure piece of *Hypocrisie* to scare their own *Children*, and fright them into Obedience. This is the Nature and Disposition of a great many *Parents* (tho not all on such gross a manner) and (that which is more strange too) even of such as have very *Prudent*, *Grave*, *Discreet*, *Ingenious Gentlemen*; and such too as have had all the appearances of *Generous* and *Religious*

gious Persons. But how much these things can agree with, or be any ways consistant with such *Mean*, *Sordid*, *Base* and *Ignoble Actions*, I shall leave to the Candor and Judgment of any *Impartial* and Unprejudiced Man whatsoever.

I shall conclude all with a few words of Friendly Advice. First for *Old Persons* who are on the other side Sixty, I would advise them not to marry at all, but rather employ themselves on the thoughts of the other World (for they know they can have but a short time to stay in this) and in instructing and doing good to others; and this will be the only sure way to get true Honour and satisfaction. But if they must trouble themselves with

with the thoughts of *Matrimony* (which upon some accounts may be reasonable enough too) let them pitch upon some Grave and Pious *Matron*, suitable to their Years and Fortunes; by which means they may prove mutual Helps and great Comforts to each other, and not set their minds upon young Wild *Creatures*, who will be to hard for them every way, cause them to be made common Laughing-stocks to the enquiring World, plague and disturb all their *Quiet* and *Ease*, and help to send them to their Graves long before their times.

Next for *Children*, since they have not a Power of disposing of themselves as they think fit; and since such sad and deplorable

plorable Effects do often follow from their making use of such a Power, let them not dare to venture upon this Sacred Order of *Matrimony* without their Parents consent; but let them have a strict and more than ordinary care to avoid all *Temptations* till they have leave, as they would a most deadly Precipice. But for the *Young Persons* that have a larger power of disposing of themselves, 'twill be the highest piece of *Folly* to marry one that is much beneath them (except there be some extraordinary Excellencies besides *Beauty*) for he can never be sure of her *Love*, the very Life and Soul of all their Hopes and Comports. Neither would I have any Persons aim at those that are much above their *Rank* (a Paradox indeen to a great many People)

for then the mind is often ſo horridly corrupted with baſe and ungenerous Deſires, that the danger and ill conſequences are much the other way.

Laſtly, For *Parents* and the like, let them ſeriouſly conſider the great Account they muſt give at the laſt day for many of their *Childrens* Failings, eſpecially thoſe woful Misfortunes they have brought upon them by their own means, and with the heynous ſins of *Perjury* and *Treachery*; therefore let them dread the very thoughts of all ſuch *Unhappy Matches*. For this reaſon let them not be extraordinary ambitious of marrying their *Children* above their *Fortunes*, but however they ought to take care to have them marryed in time, leaſt they prove

Diſhoneſt,

Dishoneſt, *Stubborn* and *Irreclaimable*. On the other ſide, let them not diſdain to marry them below their *Rank*, nor ſtand too much upon *Smithfield Bargains* when they have a *Competency* themſelves, and they find a *Sober*, *Vertuous Perſon*, whoſe *Education*, *Ingenuity* and other good Properties will make amends for *Mony* and all other inconſiderable *Triſles*.

Before I quite conclude all, I muſt adviſe every Perſon whatſoever, let 'em be *Young* or *Old*, *Parents* or *Children*, to have a peculiar care of Marrying to any of *different Religions*; for notwithſtanding there be *Content* on all ſides, *Love*, *Mony*, *Good Inclinations*, &c. this one thing is enough to ruine all, deſtroy all their Pleaſures, and may make it the deareſt piece of Folly to 'em they ever were guilty of in their Lives.

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Plus d'une fois je me suis étonné
Que ce qui fait la paix du mariage
En est le point le moins considéré.
Lorsque l'on met une fille en ménage,
Les père et mère ont pour objet le bien;
Tout le surplus ils le comptent pour rien;
Jeune tendron à vieillard appartient;
Et cependant je vois qu'ils se soucient
D'avoir chevaux à leur char attelés
De même taille, et mêmes chiens couplés;
Ainsi des bœufs qui de force pareille
Sont toujours pris; car ce seroit merveille,
Si sans cela la charrue alloit bien:
Comment pourroit celle du mariage
Ne mal aller, étant un attelage
Qui bien souvent ne se rapporte en rien?

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